

THE RELIGIOUS MONITOR,

OR,
EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY.



DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION, AS SET
FORTH IN THE FORMULARIES OF THE WESTMINSTER
DIVINES, AND OF THE CHURCHES IN HOLLAND.

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Original Communications.

For the Religious Monitor.

ORDINATION CHARGES.

*Charges delivered by the Rev. JAMES IRVINE, of Hebron, N. Y. at
the Ordination of the Rev. JAMES WHYTE, to the pastoral inspec-
tion of the Associate Congregation of Salem, N. Y.—July 6th,
1825.*

TO THE PASTOR.

DEAR BROTHER.—According to the order of God's house, you are now commissioned to take part with us in this ministry—to declare the whole counsel of God; therefore, to manifest the truth to every man's conscience, as in the sight of God—to be jealous over men with a Godly jealousy—wrestling against principalities and powers—and travailling in birth until Christ be formed in souls—are labours of love which henceforth in life must devolve upon you. The work to which you are called is most arduous, most solemn, most responsible. In reposing this trust in you, the Great Head of the church, here in the presence of men and angels, charges you to be faithful. In his great and fearful name, and as the organ of this Presbytery; with feelings of brotherly affection, I bring to you this divine charge.

The spirit of inspiration distinguishes, and addresses you by various titles, thus intimating your various duties. Although these are numerous, in addressing you, we propose to advert to two only.

Vol. II.

I. You are constituted an Ambassador for Christ. Man, by sin, has forfeited the friendship of heaven. But those who were sometimes alienated, and enemies in their minds by wicked works, Christ hath reconciled in the body of his flesh through death. God hath committed to you the ministry of reconciliation. You are then an Ambassador for Christ. As a faithful Ambassador you are,

First. To shew to sinners the guilt of their apostacy from God, and the means of reconciliation. An impressive sense of guilt must be produced in order that man may be induced to embrace the true reconciliation. He therefore speaks not with divine authority, who harps upon the dignity of fallen human nature. He speaks not with divine authority, who declares Adam's sin, by imputation, is not charged on all our race, even to condemnation. He speaks not with divine authority, who maintains that rebels against the King of Kings, can in justice receive a full pardon, without an atonement by the blood of a Divine Saviour. These, and sentiments similar to these, promote the idea, that our apostacy from God is but a slight offence. This idea, in its turn, tends to produce inattention to the voice that warns of danger, and which urges to an immediate acceptance of the atonement made.

You are called to oppose these soul-destroying sentiments, by urging that law by which every mouth should be stopped, and all become guilty before God. When sinful men have been brought to a sense of guilt, and have been made to relinquish all hope of relief from human resources, then in the name of your divine master proclaim pardon and acceptance. While the voice of mere pretenders is heard in declarations of pardon and favour, simply in the way of imitating the exemplary life of a mere creature—or through an atonement, which yields more than half the glory of salvation to man's free will—be it your concern to declare a whole salvation, through such an atonement as satisfied the loud demands of offended justice, and secures the honors of the divine government. Urge men to an improvement, by faith, of that reconciliation, effected by the vicarious doings and sufferings of the Son of God.

Second. As a faithful Ambassador, you are to declare to sinners the whole counsel of God.

In sending you forth, God puts in your hands the Bible. This contains your commission, and *all* your instructions. You are never, then, to urge your own speculations as part of your instructions from the court of heaven. "For I testify unto every man who readeth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book."

But farther, you are to keep nothing back.

The love of the world's applause—the dread of the world's scorn would dissuade from a full compliance herein. The

spurious liberality of the day seeks to close the lips of Ambassadors for Christ, against all disputed truths. It declares many truths communicated by the God of heaven, non-essential, unimportant. But what would you think of that Ambassador from an earthly court, who dares withhold a part of his positive instructions? In what estimation would you hold him who would insult his sovereign, by treating any part of his instructions as trifling or useless? Shun not, thou, therefore, to declare the whole counsel of God. "If any man shall take away from the words of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things written in this book."

Third. As a faithful Ambassador, you are to support the dignity of your station, in all your conduct. Let your conversation be such as becometh the gospel. Much of your success is hereupon dependant. No brightness of genius—no superiority of intellect—no extent of scientific acquirements, can ever be a substitute for good example. This is all important. With the blessing of God, it will ever procure respect, and secure your own dignity; it will give energy to all your instructions, and prove a lasting blessing to those among whom you are called to labour.

The glory of God is also herein concerned.

From the relation between an Ambassador and his sovereign, the odium incurred by the legate attaches itself to his Lord.—Alas! how frequently is this forgotten. Does that Ambassador for Christ, walk worthy of his high calling who courts the trifling company, or the vain applause of a wicked world? Does he walk worthy of his Lord, who displays such levity, as would cause the mere polite man of the world, *for him*, to blush and hang his head? Does he honor his master who gives his foolish jests in the sacred language of his instructions? O, how frequently do imperfect Ambassadors thus offend their Sovereign, and mar his work! There are multitudes of wretched spirits shut up in the prison-house of hell, who are perhaps, at this moment cursing as one occasion of their rejection of the gospel message, the laugh of levity—the joke in the way of scripture quotation—or the evident itchings after this world's applause from some thoughtless, unworthy Ambassador for Christ. Your station is responsible—

"You stand the messenger of truth;

"You stand the legate of the skies;

"Your theme, divine—your office, sacred."

O, then, beware. Be thou an ensample to the *flock*. Walk in wisdom, also toward them who are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer every man.

II. You are appointed a pastor, a shepherd over Christ's flock.

The Chief Shepherd has this day committed to you the care of this flock. As a faithful pastor you are called,

First. To feed the flock with knowledge and understanding. For divine knowledge multitudes of this age seem to have no relish. To many the doctrine of the cross are stale and insipid. Hence, metaphysical niceties are substituted for the sincere milk of the word.—Hence, high-sounding, but empty declamation, instead of the doctrines of Jesus.—Hence, pretty essays on the beauties of virtue and the evils of immorality, instead of the evangelical doctrine of sanctification through the blood of sprinkling.—Hence, also, noisy revivals without knowledge, and often with errors subversive of true godliness, instead of gospel piety, through means of gospel instruction. The predicted time has come when men will not endure sound doctrine, but are turned unto fables. Multitudes, even in the bosom of the church, are without the sincere milk of the word, and perishing for lack of knowledge. “Woe be unto the pastors who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, saith the Lord!”

While others, therefore, are leaving immortal souls to famish and to die—withholding from them all that by the God of heaven is constituted their nutriment—be it your care to administer, in faithfulness, the word of life. Direct the flock to the green pastures beside the still waters. Set before them that bread of life which came down from heaven. Lead them to those refreshing streams which issue from beneath the throne of God and the Lamb. Lead the hungry and thirsty soul immediately to Christ and his righteousness, that he may be filled. To this provision lead all the flock. Remember, however, that to them who are of full age, who by use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil, belongeth strong meat; but babes in Christ have need of milk. Feed the whole flock, being diligent in season and out of season, in this sacred work. Especially in imitation of the Chief Shepherd, carry the tender lambs in your bosom. Visit the sons and daughters of affliction. Pour into their wounded hearts the balm of consolation. Where practicable, stand at the pillow of the dying. Administer in this trying hour the consolations of that gospel, which brings life and immortality to light; which diffuses a cheerful radiance even through the thick gloom of the vale of death. Listen to your Master's voice, feed the flock of God.

Second. As a faithful pastor, you are called to rule and guide the flock. You will be called to correct the wayward—to reclaim the wandering. The censurers of the church are the ordinance of God for this end. Evil practice will require this rod. As thou lovest souls, spare not. Error in principle, will also require this rod. There is a spurious charity much prevalent in the world—grasping at every thing, it extends its arms so wide as to encompass nothing. Its object is, to annihilate all creeds and confessions—to level all distinctions in religious sentiment

—to reduce to one system all that is discordant in principle.—The very breath of such monster-charity is pestilence and death. This is one of the most specious schemes for the annihilation of church discipline and church existence, ever laid by the prince of darkness. The scriptures recognize such sinners as heretics; and according to a fixed rule of discipline, they are to be rejected. As to rule and authority, you will also frequently be called to sit in judgment in the court of Christ. Here show yourself grave, temperate, and decided. “I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.”

Third. As a faithful pastor you are bound to give protection to the flock. The Spirit speaketh expressly, that “some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. That grievous wolves shall enter in, not sparing the flock.” It becomes every shepherd, therefore, to watch and warn of coming danger. “Son of man, God is now saying to you, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel, therefore, thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked man, O wicked man thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked man from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hand.” And the present day demands your special care in watching. Although the streams of life unobserved, are silently turning into new channels, and visiting far distant regions with their refreshing influence—although that seed is now scattering which will one day spring up in an abundant harvest, yet the desolations of infidelity are feared and felt. Men, professing themselves servants of Christ, are making every exertion to remove every landmark of Christianity, and involve the whole Christian community in anarchy and confusion. “He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face; therefore keep the monition; watch the way; make thy loins strong; fortify thy power mightily.” “Take heed unto thyself, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made thee an overseer.”

Finally my brother—yours will be a lot altogether peculiar, if in your future course you meet not temptation and great opposition. The powers of earth and hell will set themselves in opposition to your work. These enemies will also wait your halting, that they may triumph over you—over the church—over Christ.

Are you, my brother, in view of the importance, responsibility and danger of your station, ready to exclaim, who is sufficient for these things? O, lean upon the faithfulness of him who hath promised, *my grace shall be sufficient for thee, as thy day is, so shall thy strength be.* Come with all your wants to God; and *my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.* In a word—I charge thee before God and the

Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his Kingdom: Preach the word; be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. Watch in all things, endure affliction; do the work of an Evangelist; make full proof of thy ministry. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, thou shalt receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Grace be with thee. Amen.

TO THE PEOPLE.

Brethren of this Associate Congregation,

You are highly favoured by the God of heaven.—Your eyes this day behold your teacher. In this day's event you are called to the exercise of gratitude. This dispensation must be viewed as merciful. Yet it places upon you an awful responsibility. In God's great name, therefore, we charge you to beware how you receive this grace of God.

God has sent this his servant among you as an Ambassador. Receive, therefore, his message from the court of heaven. His work is to proclaim reconciliation through the sanctification of Christ—to pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God—to reveal the whole counsel of God, keeping nothing back. To this message of divine mercy and grace, listen for your lives.—Receive the word, not as the word of man, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh in you who believe.

Receive God's Ambassador with all due respect. He has a divine appointment. "He stands the legate of the skies." If the Sovereign be glorious, the Ambassador must be honorable. Give them honour to whom honour is due. How often are gospel-hearers wanting in due respect to God's Ambassadors.—Their characters are often traduced by those who should count them worthy of double honour. If they are not treated with open insult, how often have they fallen by secret slander. This is a restless enemy, ever intent on the annihilation of all order, peace and felicity, in civil and religious society. My brethen, beware lest any of you should be wanting in due respect to God's servant—pilfering from him by any means, what is to him infinitely more valuable than silver or gold—his good name—his Christian character. "Know them who labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you." Esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.

Make suitable provision for his entertainment. An earthly sovereign would require this for his Ambassador—the Sovereign of heaven can require no less. Strive then by all means to render his residence among you comfortable. Particularly, study to give due support in worldly goods. His master permits him not to entangle himself with the affairs of this world. As you regard your solemn public pledge—as you value your own interest—as you value the favour of the King of Kings, compel

not this his servant to devote to the world that time which should be devoted to study, to prayer, to exhortation from house to house. If he sow among you spiritual things, is it a great matter if he shall reap your carnal things?

Thus receive this Ambassador for Christ. Remember the words of our Saviour. "He that receiveth you, receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me." Insult not the King of Kings, who sends his Ambassador among you rebel worms of earth, proclaiming peace by the blood of the cross, by rejecting the gracious terms of peace—by want of due respect to his servant—by failure to provide for his comfortable entertainment. Remember if you thus insult the majesty of heaven, he may in anger recall his servant; and if in anger recalled, it is a sign of coming war—a presage of fearful desolation.

This servant of the Lord has this day been constituted your spiritual pastor. Receive him as such. *He comes to feed you with knowledge and understanding.* Receive this appointed food of your souls, at his hand. Wait faithfully upon all his ministrations, that you may receive spiritual nourishment, and increase in spiritual stature. There is sometimes among gospel hearers a fastidiousness which proves hurtful to him who feeds the flock. There are individuals who are dissatisfied with every thing, that may not be in all respects according to their own taste. In their conduct, these individuals generally reverse the divine rule, and are slow to hear, swift to speak, swift to wrath. Brethren be not of the number. There is another obstacle to the right improvement of the word—the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches. These choke the word, and men become unfruitful. Herein take good heed to yourselves, as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.

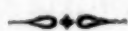
He has authority given to correct and restrain.

This is the most painful part of his service. But after all the pain which arises from the nature of the service, he, in addition, frequently suffers the cruel resentment of those whom he would thus profit. Due correction often irritates proud human nature—and although the judgment may assent to the righteousness of the deed, yet every rebellious feeling is exasperated. More disturbances in the church have arisen from this, than perhaps from any other source. As you value the peace of Jerusalem, and your own improvement in holiness, receive with Christian meekness the corrections of your pastor. The divine rule is plain. "Obey them who have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they who must give an account; that they may do it with joy and not with grief."

As your pastor, God's servant is your *protector*. In submitting yourselves to him for protection two things are necessary. 1st. When he warns you of danger from spiritual foes, you must give due heed to the warning, and endeavour to shun the danger

and the death prepared. For if he faithfully warn you, and you flee not, but die, your blood will God require at your own hand. 2d. You must avoid danger by keeping at a distance from all ravening wolves. There are many who will come in sheep's clothing, who are still ravening wolves. With a rapacity "insatiable as the grave," these make havock among the flock. False teachers, with a diligence "unwearied as the wing of time," persist in their attempts to poison the pure stream of life. Especially of this sort are they "who creep into houses and lead captive silly women laden with sins: who moreover have the form of Godliness, but deny the power thereof: From such turn away, cease from the instruction which causeth to err."

Finally, brethren, pray much that through your pastor's labours, the word may have free course and be glorified in the salvation of souls. Live godly lives. "*Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. Having your conversation honest among the gentiles, that they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Beware lest ye also fall from your stedfastness, being enticed away with the error of the wicked. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever.*" Amen.



For the Religious Monitor.

AN EXPOSITION OF EPHESIANS, i. 10.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

According to the testimony of the Apostle Peter, many passages of scripture are not only *hard to be understood*, but also liable to be *wrested* by persons to their eternal destruction. And were I allowed to point out as an example of passages of this description, I should quote the words of Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians, i. 10. where he says, in describing the end for which God had published the mystery of his will, *That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.* I select this text in particular, not merely because there may be some difficulty in understanding its precise meaning, but because I have heard it employed by Universalists as an argument, nay, as positive proof, for the doctrine of universal salvation. Now, if any man can persuade himself, or others, to believe from this passage, that God will save *all* men, and receive them into the holy joys of heaven, however much, or however long they may continue to indulge in sin and the service of the Devil, it does appear to me, and the thought is very affecting, that they are guilty of *wresting* it to their own destruction.

It is not our intention however, at present, to enter upon the Universalian controversy;—we take it for granted that God, according to his word, *will* turn the wicked into hell and all the nations that forget God, and will torment them there for ever and ever. Our only design is, to endeavour to give some *consistent* explanation of the text above cited—an explanation, that may be more agreeable to the analogy of faith, than the gloss of the Universalists. And for this purpose, observe the context. In the beginning of the chapter, the Apostle, after the usual salutation, proceeds to tender his grateful acknowledgments to God the Father, for the rich bestowment of his spiritual favours upon unworthy, perishing sinners. In the bestowment of these incomparable favours, he declares that God acted in agreeableness to an eternal choice, which he had made of sinners in Christ before the foundation of the world: And this *choice*, or *election*, was made, he informs us, not from any foreseen *good* in the sinner, but merely from the sovereign good pleasure of his eternal will, that he might show forth the exceeding riches of his glorious grace, wherein alone sinners are made accepted in the Beloved. From the 7th to the 14th verse inclusive, he proceeds to expatiate on the great blessings and privileges which flow from the electing love of God, and which are enjoyed in consequence of the mediation of his Son, Christ Jesus: And among these, he enumerates the publication of the gospel. The gospel, or that gracious scheme of saving sinners through Jesus Christ, which the gospel presents to our faith, and particularly the proclamation of this scheme of salvation to the Gentiles, that they also should be fellow heirs with the Jews and admitted with them to a mutual participation of the same privileges and blessings under Messiah, the common head of the whole church, is “the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.” And for what end, has this glorious mystery of God’s will been made known? The answer is in the 10th verse, “That, in the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.”

The gospel dispensation of God’s grace, as opposed to the Old Testament dispensation of it, is here called “the dispensation of the fulness of times:” because this was the time which God had marked out from eternity for the enlargement of his church, and the greater display of his glory; because this was the time to which all the rites, types, and sacrifices of the ancient church, looked forward, and in which they were all to be fulfilled and abolished; and because this was the time in which ancient prophecy respecting the advent of Messiah, and the subsequent increase of his government, was to meet its accomplishment; being the period which the prophets surveyed with rapture, when they “prophesied beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.” This dispensation, then, as introduced by Christ and his Apostles, is the last dispensation of grace to sin-

ners. And during this dispensation, God has determined "to gather together in one, or (as the word signifies) to sum up in one head all things in Christ both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him." There is a passage precisely parallel with this in the first chapter of Col. "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and (having made peace through the blood of his cross,) by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things on earth, or things in heaven." Now the only difficulty in these passages respects the meaning which we are to attach to the words, *things in heaven*, and, *things on earth*. We have already hinted, that the Universalists make these *texts* to preach universal salvation, nay, a universal restoration not of men only, but also of devils. But passing this doctrine as a damnable heresy, and this exposition of these scriptures as a *wresting* of them to the *destruction* of souls; we remark, that among the pious and orthodox there is some diversity of opinion on the question before us. Some by the *things in heaven*, understand, the angelic hosts, and by the *things on earth*, believers of all nations, and suppose that both these will at length be united in one great society or church under Christ as a common head, in order that a perfect harmony and sameness may be enjoyed in the eternal worship of God in heaven. And in support of this interpretation they adduce that sublime passage in the twelfth Chap. of Heb. "Ye are come to the heavenly Jerusalem and to an innumerable company of Angels," &c. But to this exposition there are some objections. The Angels can never be so incorporated with the church "redeemed from among men" as to form a part of it; the church is *complete* without them, she is the *fulness* of Jesus Christ, she constitutes the whole body of the Head, Christ. Again, in the passage in Col. the *things in heaven* are said to be as much *reconciled* unto God by Christ, as are the *things on earth*; but the Angels were never at any time at variance or enmity with their Maker, and consequently were never the proper subjects of reconciliation through the mediation of Christ. And since Christ is not the Mediator of Angels, their services are directed immediately to God without the intervention of his mediation and consequently their worship can never be precisely the same with that of the redeemed, they can never mingle their notes with them in that holy song of thanksgiving, "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood," &c.

Other expositors, by "the things in heaven" understand the Jews, and by "the things on earth" the Gentiles, and suppose that the Apostle is here speaking of the union of these under Christ in the New Testament church: And this opinion they support by the interpretation which the Apostle gives in the 12th of Heb. of the prophecy of Haggai respecting the "shaking of the heavens and the earth." But in that place the Apostle is speaking, not of persons, but of dispensations; he is merely in-

forming the Hebrews that the Old Testament dispensation, (in which sense he understands "the heavens and the earth" of the Prophet,) was shaken and set aside by the introduction of the new; which latter dispensation he pronounces immoveable, "a kingdom which cannot be moved." But that the Apostle in the verse before us, is not speaking of the union of Jews and Gentiles in the visible church of the New Testament, appears, from the circumstance of his immediately passing to a consideration of that union in the following verses;—thus verse 11. "In whom we also (we Jews) have obtained an inheritance;" and then in the 13th verse, "In whom also, ye (Gentiles) trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation."

Believing, therefore, that neither of the foregoing opinions in reference to the meaning of this text corresponds with the "mind of the Spirit" therein, we proceed to state another, and which we believe to be the correct one; viz. that by the *things in heaven* we are to understand the saints in heaven who died antecedent to the death of Christ; and by the *things on earth*, believers under the New Testament, of every nation, tongue, and kindred. The following remarks will tend to prove and illustrate this opinion. Speaking of the Old Testament saints in the close of the 11th Chap. of Heb. the Apostle says, "These all having obtained a good report through faith, obtained *not* the promise, God having provided some better thing for us that they without us should not be made *perfect*." The happiness of these saints was suspended upon the future accomplishment of the promise respecting the coming of Christ and his vicarious death; they did not live to see this promise accomplished, but died in the full faith of its accomplishment, and on the accomplishment of it alone depended all the bliss and happiness to which they were exalted; without this therefore they could not have been *perfect*. But again these saints formed only a *part* of "the body of Christ," only a *part* of that church which God from eternity had purposed to redeem; this body of Christ, this church of the living God, according to the purpose of Jehovah, was to be completed and perfected under the present dispensation of grace, hence it follows, that without the present dispensation the church could not have been *perfect*. Now, the Apostle, in the scripture under consideration, having mentioned the "dispensation of the fulness of times," that is, the present dispensation of grace in opposition to the old dispensation, would very naturally be led to contemplate the design that God had conceived for perfecting his church, by gathering together in one, or summing up in one head through the finished work of redemption, both the "things in heaven" and the "things on earth." Previous to the coming of Christ, the saints could not be said to stand in a crucified Redeemer, but in one to be crucified; since the death of Christ, however, both the Old and New Testament saints are made to stand together in one crucified Head, Jesus Christ. And the gospel, the mystery of God's will,

was introduced and published for this end, that God might perfect his church, by uniting together, or gathering together, in one glorious Head, one crucified and ascended Saviour, all the redeemed of God, whether they belonged to the old or new dispensation of grace. Such then, appears to us to be the meaning of the Apostle, when he declares that it is the intention of God, "in the dispensation of the fulness of times to gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him."

J. M.

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For the Religious Monitor.

THE REDEMPTION AND SANCTIFICATION OF THE CHURCH.

[We are happy in being able to gratify our readers with a series of papers of no ordinary excellence, on the subject announced in the above title. They have been transcribed verbatim, from a discourse or rather dissertation of the late DR. SHAW, founded on Eph. v. 25—27. Though with no view to publication, it has been written with the greatest care; and, like all his other productions, is remarkable for correct theological sentiment, perspicuity, strength and elegance of diction, and a rich savour of piety, which runs through the whole. It is proposed to publish a volume of similar pieces, from his MSS. and we feel confident, that all who read this specimen, will be desirous to possess the whole. It consists of a number of distinct, yet closely related observations or propositions, each of which, will form a paper, complete in itself, of a suitable length for our work: so that, though we shall be under the necessity of using the hateful words, "*to be continued*," they will not here, as in most instances, break in upon the course of argument or illustration.]

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EPHESIANS, v. 25—27. *Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might Sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish.*

If we cast our eye over a map of the travels of Paul, it will instantly appear, that the most celebrated countries and cities in the ancient world, were the scenes of his labours, sufferings and triumphs; such as Jerusalem in Judea, Antioch in Syria, Ephesus in Asia Minor, Corinth and Athens in Greece, and Rome, the mistress of the world. Now, to preach the strange doctrine of Christ crucified in these renowned seats of philosophy, politeness, law and government, was, it must be acknowledged, an enterprise of no ordinary magnitude. It was, in truth, to risk the hottest part in the battle—to penetrate the very strong holds of idolatry and vice—and to attack them on their very thrones, upheld as they were, by imperial favour and military power, by the schools of philosophy, the colleges of priests, with the stupid admiration of

the multitude. A brief notice of Ephesus, will set this matter in a clear light. That city was the metropolis of Proconsular Asia, and famous among the Heathen for the temple of Diana, which for its largeness, furniture and workmanship, was esteemed one of the seven wonders of the world. Being, moreover, the residence of the Roman Proconsul, the seat of the courts of justice, and the greatest trading town in Asia, on this side mount Taurus, it was a place of common resort for men of fortune, and learning, and genius. Yet, in spite of every terror and every obstacle, the Apostle, by boldly preaching the despised doctrines of the cross for the space of about three years, on that noted theatre of idolatry and iniquity, succeeded in founding a famous christian church, amongst these idolatrous and effeminate Asiatics. And, when after many painful and surprising vicissitudes in his life, he was carried a prisoner to Rome, he addressed from thence, his letter to the church at Ephesus, as the inscription, which is undoubtedly genuine, bears.

Every thing in the sentiments, order and diction of this epistle, and of that to the Collossians, shews, that the two letters were written by the same person, at, or nearly at the same time, and upon the same subject, and transmitted to their respective churches by the same messenger. Both epistles, represent the writer as under imprisonment for the gospel, and both treat of the same general subject. The leading doctrine of both epistles, is the union of Jews and Gentiles under the christian dispensation, and that doctrine in both, is illustrated by the same similitudes: "one head," "one body," "one new man," "one temple." The two epistles, also, remarkably agree in the run of thought, and warmth with which it is expressed.

The epistle to the Ephesians, is not at all of a controversial nature. It touches upon most sublime matters, and is expressed, (according to Grotius,) in words more sublime than are to be found in any human language.

In setting forth the great discoveries which he styles, "the mystery of God, and of Christ," and "the mystery of God's will," the Apostle may be said to have had a threefold object in view, and to have accomplished a threefold purpose. 1st. To degrade in the eyes of the Ephesians the mysteries of their idolatrous gods, by representing the superior glory and virtue of the mystery of Christ. 2d. To produce in them an elevation of sentiment and affection corresponding to the sublime mystery of God's will, into the knowledge of which, he had taken pains to lead them. 3d. To lay a proper basis for practical commands and exhortations, which he mingles with and supports by doctrinal facts and references. Thus, in the text, he illustrates and enforces the duties of husbands and wives, by introducing the deep mystery relating to Christ and the church—showing that the love of husband and wife, should resemble that between Christ

and the church. In speaking of this mystery, we shall endeavour,

I. To explain the text in some general observations.

II. To prove and illustrate the connection between the death of Christ and the purification and glory of the church.

PART I.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.—1. OF THE CHURCH.

Ols. 1. Our text expressly recognises the fact of the existence of that society, which is commonly denominated the "Church." But, what is the church? In answering this question, we need not stop to dispute with the Papists, whether the Pope be the Vicar or Vicegerent of Christ upon earth, or with the English Episcopalians, whether the King be the head of the church, or whether a visible head on earth be at all essential to a church. We shall carefully avoid all appearance of controversy on this subject; but as in order to be understood, it is necessary to be accurate and often minute, in explaining the meaning of words, we must here observe, that the words in the Hebrew, Greek and Latin Languages, which in English are rendered church, congregation, or assembly, signify an assembly of any kind, sacred or civil, lawful or riotous, and that the context alone can determine what kind is meant. The same word elsewhere rendered church, is applied Acts xix. 32, 39, to a mob, and to a lawful assembly—in Col. iv. 15. to a small company of Christians meeting together in a private house—to believers in one place or city, as contradistinguished from those in other places, the church in Jerusalem—to all the professors of the gospel, the whole christian community diffused over the earth, 1 Cor. xii. 28.—and in the text, to the whole body of the redeemed whose names are written in heaven.

Some have denied the existence altogether of a visible catholic society, distinct from the company of the redeemed, and in which Christ has deposited his truth and instituted his ordinances. But we would ask, was not every Jew who had the token of God's covenant in his flesh, whether regenerated or not, reputed a member of the Jewish church, or will any say, that all partook of saving grace, who partook of the privileges of the Jewish church? And is not the professing people of God a mixed assemblage of tares and wheat, of good with bad? It is in this visible society, that God hath set Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, and if these officers were limited to the election of grace, then, on the one hand, the pastoral relation could not be formed without first knowing who are the election of grace, and on the other hand, none could be kept out of the church, because even a blasphemer, a persecutor, may, like Paul, be a chosen vessel.

But of the existence of the society, of which the text speaks, which goes by the name of "the church invisible," which con-

sists of "the election of grace," "of those predestinated to life," the number of which is, to us, an impenetrable secret, many of whose numbers have already gone to the invisible world, whose distinctive properties are those "of the hidden man of the heart," no sect of Christians will dare to suggest a doubt.—From the earliest times, there have existed promises and gracious revelations of God, and consequently a people of God, acceptable worshippers of God, or in other words, a church of God, amongst men.

This society, or church of true believers, comprehends all those, who, before the second coming of Christ shall have been gathered promiscuously out of all nations. It may fairly be doubted, whether any city, village, congregation, or country, have ever universally embraced the gospel; but it will appear in the end, that this society is diffused over the whole earth, comprising in its limits, the length and breadth of the globe, and composed of multitudes from every nation under heaven, who understand, believe, love, and act according to that Revelation which God's beloved Son and most illustrious Messenger, hath imparted to erring mortals. Christ himself said, "the Son of Man shall gather his elect from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other." Matt. xxiv. 31. And again, 40, 41, "then shall two be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other left.—Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken and the other left." Hence the church is styled "a general assembly," which, when collected, shall celebrate in the following strains, the praises of the Redeemer; "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Rev. v. 9.

Again—the words of the text, "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it," plainly import, that the number of her members is unalterably limited and defined. It is utterly incredible, that a person possessed of the astonishing wisdom and prudence of Jesus Christ, should love and give himself for—he knew not whom. How could it be said that he loved the church, if it were not known and determined who and what the church was? It would indeed be fearful presumption, in mortals to step into God's place, and say this one is elected, that one is reprobated, this one is sure of heaven, but that one shall die in his sins.—But this knowledge is not too high for God. It is the prerogative of Deity to know the end from the beginning. Viewed as a whole complete body, the church has the number of her members accurately defined and permanently fixed; but if viewed at any particular period of her existence on earth, the number of living and acting believers varies exceedingly at different times.—Sometimes faith is scarcely to be found on the earth. True religion may, at times, be compared "to the little cloud rising out of the sea like a man's hand," which Elijah's servant saw from the top of Carmel, I Kings, xviii. or to a handful of corn on the

top of a high mountain, waving in the wind, and scarcely retaining its hold of the earth. "They were not all Israel who were of Israel," even when the outward dispensation of religion was restricted to the small nation of the Jews. Messiah himself met, in general, contempt and execration. At other times again, God makes the place of his feet glorious, by adding members to this sacred community, numerous as the drops of the morning dew. But as no new thoughts or purposes can arise in the mind of an everlasting, almighty and omniscient being, it would be as absurd as impious, to suppose that the church, abstractly considered, is capable either of increase or diminution. Now that the church does consist of a certain definite number, selected from the whole mass of mankind, we think is manifest from the following facts and arguments.

In the first gospel promise, the ideas of selection and separation are clearly implied. "The seed of the woman," (that is,) Christ, the head of all true believers in him, are expressly distinguished from the seed of the serpent, (that is,) the Devil, and his agents amongst men. The temporal redemptions of Israel being of a particular, exclusive nature, limited to "the seed of Jacob," and in which the Egyptians, and other heathen nations, had no share, were a shadow of particular redemption by Christ. The very plagues of Egypt marked out the Israelites as a peculiar people; the Egyptians alone were smitten, while the Israelites were redeemed by the blood of the paschal lamb. Ever after, the Israelites were to redeem their first born by paying a price, Ex. xiii. 13. In allusion to this ancient ordinance, the whole company of the redeemed is styled, "the church of the first born," being like ancient Israel, a people whom the Lord hath set apart for himself. The limitation of the legal oblations to the congregation of Israel, to the exclusion of the surrounding nations, requires a similar limitation of the sacrifice of Christ to the church of true believers, that the type and anti-type may have a correspondence. Christ himself made a similar distinction and limitation: he distinguishes his sheep, whom he knows, from others, whom he calls wolves and hirelings. These sheep he loved; for them he laid down his life; or, as in the text, "he loved the church, and gave himself for it."

Again—the term church conveys the ideas of unity, order, honour and harmony. The human body consists of many members, but is nevertheless a unit. There are innumerable forms of disease, but all diseases are but a unit. There are many moral diseases, so to speak, yet sin is but a unit, one body of sin, all and every sin being "a want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God." In like manner, the church of believers, though gathered from north, south, east and west, out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation, is, nevertheless, one church, one body, one kingdom, Eph. iv. 5, 6. All believers are animated by the self same omnipresent spirit of Christ, whose indwelling is the

efficient cause of their unity in faith and hope, affection and obedience. This is a very glorious society, every member of it being the workmanship of God himself, created after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness and true holiness. O, what a blessedness to be a member of this honourable society, all glorious within, and at last without spot or wrinkle!

[To be Continued.]

Selections.

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

[The following remarks from the *Evangelical Witness*, (a work which corresponds with its title,) is to our mind a *demonstration* of the practical results of a provision in the constitution of this society, at which we expressed our regret, in our first Number, (see p. 46.) And we cannot but again express our regret that a society so powerful, as in all probability the American Tract Society will be, should spend its energies and its funds in the dissemination of merely moral dissertations and tales, destitute of almost every characteristic of Christianity, and in the greatest danger of being deeply tinged with sentiments which men of orthodox principles believe to be subversive of the first principles of the gospel. Perhaps it would be difficult to furnish a more striking example than this does of the tendency of the much-praised *Catholicism* of the present day, to banish every thing that is glorious in the gospel of Christ from the church. There is perhaps no way that promises to be of greater utility than the extensive distribution of sound, evangelical Tracts. But we are equally satisfied that their usefulness must diminish in proportion as the principles of the gospel are excluded from them; and positively hurtful as soon as they become the vehicles of error. Under the strict operation of the articles in the constitution of this society, which are the subject of the following remarks, the character of the Tracts circulated through our country must speedily be changed. It must be obvious, we think, to every one who knows the conflicting tenets held by the different members of the publishing committee, that there will be but very few Tracts published by the American Tract Society, which some one or other of them would not condemn.]

It is impossible for any friend of truth and of the interests of the church in the United States to contemplate an institution so powerful, as this one is likely to become, with indifference. The very great amount of tracts which it will put into circulation, will have an influence, an extensive influence, on the religious community; for while some ignorant and ungodly people read the tracts, it cannot be doubted that a great majority of the readers of these little books are the professors of religion and their children. It is the effect which the tracts have upon these latter, rather than the conversation of the profane or thoughtless, that merits especial consideration, in this business. The com-

plexion of the tracts must decide this point. Let us now endeavour to ascertain what that will be, or rather what it will not be.

The 6th article of the constitution contains the following provision. "The publishing committee shall contain no two members of the same denomination; and no tract shall be published to which any member of that committee shall object.

The publishing committee for the present year are :

The Rev. James Milnor, D. D. of the Episcopal church.

The Rev. Gardiner Spring, D. D. of the Presbyterian church.

The Rev. John Knox, D. D. of the Reformed Dutch church.

The Rev. I. Edwards, Andover, of the Congregational church.

The Rev. Charles G. Sommers, of the Baptist church.

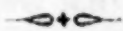
_____ of the Methodist Episcopal church.

For the present year, we have confidence that no directly erroneous doctrines will be published in any of the tracts of this institution, for we are persuaded from our knowledge of Dr. Knox, that he will object to any thing contravening the confession of the synod of Dort. This is important in so heterogeneous an association, as the A. T. Society exhibits. Let us now try the other side. Dr. Milnor will object to any tract that teaches the Presbyterian form of church government. Dr. Spring, an avowed and zealous partizan of Hopkinsianism will object to any tract teaching the total depravity of the sinner, or the condemnation of all men for Adam's sin, or the natural inability of the sinner to make himself a new heart, or justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ. In all this, we presume he will be joined by the Rev. Mr. Edwards of Andover. The Rev. Mr. Sommers of the Baptist church, will object to any tract exhibiting the obligations of Baptism which has been administered to infants, or the duties devolving on them as enrolled church members. The Methodist member will object to any tract maintaining the doctrine of the eternal, unchangeable and sovereign love of God, and the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, while he will agree with Dr. Spring, and Mr. Edwards in most of their Hopkinsianism. Now we are persuaded that the great body of those, who are called orthodox in *America*, will be of the opinion that some of those objections touch the vitals of Christianity. One speaker at the organization of the Society, tells us that every tract should contain as much truth as will point out the way of salvation to a sinner who has no other means of acquiring a knowledge of it. But if this is through the imputed righteousness of Christ, no such tract will be published this year by the institution. Now, we ask, is it proper that societies, whose tracts teach this capital doctrine of the Christian system, should put their funds into the treasury of a society under such an organization? Let it be remembered too that there are some securities against error this year, that may not exist next year. Instead of so reputable and evangelical a man as Dr. Milnor, some member of the church to which he belongs, who goes all the lengths of Arminianism may be on

the publishing committee. Instead of Dr. Knox, there may be elected from the Dutch church, Eltinge, Ten Eycke of Montgomery, or Van Vechten of Schenectady, who will act with the Arminians and Hopkinsians on the subjects of natural ability, and indefinite atonement. Instead of Mr. Sommers, there may be elected from the Baptist church the Rev. Mr. Rice a Hopkinsian. Then what will be there to prevent the heresies of Arminians from being put into more extensive circulation by this society?

But even as now organized, will not the readers of this year's tracts be strongly tempted to consider, what Calvinists have been accustomed to view as of the deepest interest, altogether unimportant? Election is not here, total depravity is not here, justification by imputed righteousness is not here, &c. and therefore, they are matters of small moment, will they be tempted to think.

We cannot but consider it as a remarkable fact, in the very beginning of the history of this society that Dr. Spring the leader of the Hopkinsian party in the General Assembly, and who was opposed to the transfer of the New England Tract Society, should be the member of the Presbyterian church selected for the publishing committee. It is giving by the society the strongest testimony in its power that in its opinion, Hopkinsianism is harmless. It demonstrates, at the very commencement of its career, the prevalency of New England influence. As we call Hopkinsianism, Arminianism refined, there are at least three out of six of the publishing committee, Arminians. Surely it is reasonable to expect that the complexion of the tracts, though they may be free from direct error, will be deeply shaded with Arminianism.



AN ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT VERSION OF OUR PSALMS.

To the Editor of the Christian Recorder.

SIR,

THE very interesting and instructive analysis, which you gave in your Number for February, of Mr. Lister's Lecture on the various translations of the Bible, and of the authorized one now in use and appointed to be read in churches; has, doubtless, met a kind reception from your numerous readers; and, it is but justice in me to say, that, in common with many others, I have been highly gratified in perusing it. Our translation, as we are informed, was begun in 1607, and completed in little more than 3 years. Six of the translators were entrusted with the revision and correction of it; two from Cambridge, two from Oxford, and two from Westminster, who met in Stationers' Hall to consult among themselves, and mutually assist each other in their work. The whole translation was afterwards submitted to the critical inspection of Bishop Wilson and Dr. Smith, the latter of whom wrote the preface and prefixed the arguments. In this great work fifty-four men were employed, and by their joint la-

bours, they have furnished us, according to the judicious Selden, with "the best English translation in the world."

Some singular blunders, however, have occurred in certain editions of our translation, owing to the inattention, or rather perhaps to the wicked and waggish design of the printers. It is well known the King's printer was fined £10,000, in the court of Star-Chamber, for omitting the word "not" in the seventh commandment; a sentence of just but great severity, considering the value of money at that period. From the state of public morals, it has been supposed that copies of this edition must have got into circulation in the higher circles. Another edition was called the *Vinegar Bible*, from an erratum in the title of the 20th chapter of Luke's Gospel, where is printed "the parable of the vinegar," instead of "the vineyard."* These, however, are but the palpable and offensive blunders of the printers, and not the faults of the worthy translators.

Having made these remarks on our present authorized prose translation of the Sacred Books, perhaps you may be disposed to indulge me a little farther, while in the sequel of this paper, I claim your attention to a brief account of the Versified translation of the Psalms, which are usually sung in our public worshipping assemblies, and in our more retired family devotion.

It is well known that the present is not the only version, that has been in use in our protestant, reformed church. At a very early period, as some affirm, there was a Scots version of the Psalms, and it is extremely probable, that before the year 1546, a number of them were translated in metre; for, on the authority of Knox, we are informed, that George Wishart sung the 51st in the house of Ormiston, on the night in which he was apprehended. Two brothers, John and Robert Wedderburn, natives of Dundee, are supposed to have been the principal translators of them. This version, says Dr. M'Crie, was not completed, and at the establishment of the Reformation, it was supplanted in the churches by the version begun by Sternhold and Hopkins, and finished by the English exiles at Geneva.†

In the Reformed church in Scotland, this last was the version generally used, anterior to the adoption of the present improved version of our Psalmody. The General Assembly which met at Edinburgh in December, 1562, resolved to have an edition of this Psalter printed in their own country, for hitherto it was printed in England, and that it should be bound up with the Book of Common Order; and soon after they had the satisfaction to find, that their resolution was carried into effect. A subsequent Assembly ordained, "that every minister, exhorter and reader, should have a copy of the Psalm Book, lately printed in Edinburgh:"‡ and what is perhaps still more remarkable in the char-

* *Curios. of Liter.* l. 130.

† *Life of John Knox*, l. 364, note.

‡ *Vide Acts of Assem.*

acter of the times, the Parliament, in 1569, ordained "that all gentlemen householders, and others worth 300 merks of yearly rent, or above, and all substantial burgesses who were likewise householders, and worth 500 pounds in land or goods, should be held bound to have a Bible and Psalm Book in the vernacular language, in their houses, for the better instruction of themselves and their families in the Knowledge of God; ilk person under the penalty of ten pounds."

In this Psalter there were a great many varieties in the versification, and consequently, there must have been a corresponding variety in the tunes to which the psalms were sung; but in these remote and rude times, our venerable and zealous forefathers took peculiar delight in learning and singing *a great many* church tunes, and did not rigidly confine themselves to a few of common measure, as many professors inflexibly do, in our more noted day of musical mania and festivity.* They had their long and their short metres, their common, and their not common measures, and they sang them without reserve on all proper occasions; *the edification of no one being in the least hurt either by a quick or slow melody.* In this respect their practice differed somewhat from ours; for in many of our chapels, the introduction of one of the tunes which our venerable and grave fathers sang with the greatest composure, and with which they were quite familiar, for instance the old 100th, or the 148th psalm, would, in some of our congregations, produce a *moving* scene, and it is presumable, would be the innocent occasion for not a few leaving the place of worship and the solemnity of praise in haste and confusion. I will give you a stanza of the 148th Psalm, from the old version, which was in use since the Reformation.

Verse 3.

"Praise him both sun and moon,
Which are so clear and bright;
The same of you be done,
Ye glistening stars of light."

This is different from our metre; and my knowledge in the science of sounds is not so extensive as to enable me to say whether we have now a tune in our collection that would suit lines of the above length; but this I know, that though I have now lived nearly half a century, I have not heard, so far as I can recollect, any thing but tunes of common measure, that is, tunes suited to alternate lines of eight and six syllables, sung in any of our public assemblies; and although the old version of the 100th Psalm is transferred, from Sternhold and Hopkins' Psalter, to ours, it is generally passed over, and sung after the fashion of, "Another of the same." Tell me, Mr. Editor, why it is so.

* Once or twice of late years, a musical festival has been kept at Edinburgh, and I make no doubt, but to many it would indeed be the feast of melody and the flow of sounds.

But I am forgetting myself: it is not my intention at all, to argue the propriety or the impropriety of diversifying our psalm tunes, as much as a well regulated prudence may dictate or circumstances render proper; but to give some short historical account of our present poetical version of the Psalms.

There is a fashion in language as well as in dress, and owing to the changes necessarily produced on a living language by the lapse of time, and the progress of literary refinement, many of the phrases in the old version became obsolete, and not a few of the stanzas appeared uncouth and antiquated, like the garments worn in other times. Men of taste, and especially those possessing any portion of poetical talent, expressed in strong terms their dissatisfaction with the old translation, and their earnest wish to have a new and an improved version. James VI. a royal literary pedant, attempted a versification of the Psalms, and proceeded as far as the 31st; but his work was so characteristic and illustrative of the foible, the folly, and the vanity of the man, that it never got into public favour, and the opposition to it, though a *royal* Psalter, was almost universal. This version begun by the King, was completed by the Earl of Stirling, and printed in the year 1629.

About ten years after, Sir William More, of Rowallan, a Scotsman, and a stanch friend to the presbyterian form of church government, composed and published a metrical version of the whole Psalms; and Francis Rous, Esq. a pious gentleman, of Devonshire, of whom Principal Baillie speaks, "as an old and honest member of the House of Commons," and Mr. Neal, in his history of the Puritans, says, "he was an aged and venerable man," gave another version some time before 1640.

Rous' version was sent by the House of Commons to the Assembly of Divines who met at Westminster, in July, 1643, for the consideration of that learned body; and to be revised by them with the view of introducing it into the psalmody of the church. After some discussion, the Assembly took up the matter, and appointed a committee to carry the object of the parliament into effect.* Referring to the business of this committee, Baillie says to his correspondent, "I wish I had Rowallan's psalter here, for I like it better than any I have yet seen."

In prosecuting their object, one of the first resolutions which the Assembly formed, was to dismiss from Rous' version every extraneous composition—such as hymns and doxologies, which were sometimes affixed to the psalms, and occasionally sung at the close of praise. But the Assembly would allow no such thing to remain in practice; and were determined to keep, not only to the *sense*—but, as far as possible, to the *very words* of the sacred text. Doubtless it is owing, in a great measure, to their strict and inflexible adherence to this simple principle of

* Baillie's Letters, January 1, 1644.

translation, that we have gotten from them such a correct, plain, and even elegant version of the Book of Psalms.

It may be remarked, however, that in the progress of their labours, the Westminster Assembly were assisted by the General Assembly of the Scottish Church. The version was first revised in England, and then sent to Scotland for correction and improvement; and after many alterations were made on the original copy, the English Parliament, in 1645, approved Rous' psalms as amended by the Westminster Assembly.

Meanwhile, the Church of Scotland took the matter into more serious consideration, and calmly and coolly deliberated on the propriety of adopting this improved version, for the purpose of using it in congregations and families; and, in the Assembly which met August, 1647, Session 25, they passed the following act, entitled, "Act for revising the paraphrase of the psalmes brought from England, with a recommendation for translating the other scripturall songs in meeter."

"The General Assembly having considered the report of the committee, concerning the paraphrase of the psalmes sent from England: And finding that it is very necessary that the said paraphrase be yet revised; therefore doth appoint Mr. John Adamson to examine the first fourty psalmes; Mr. Thomas Crawford the second fourty; Mr. John Row the third fourty; and Mr. John Nevey the last thirty psalmes of that paraphrase: and in their examination they shall not only observe what they think needs to be amended, but also to set down their own essay for correcting thereof: And for this purpose recommends to them, to make use of the travells (labours) of Rowallan, Mr. Zachary Boyd, or of any other on that subject, but especially of our own paraphrase, that what they find better in any of these works may be chosen; and likewise they shall make use of the animadversions sent from Presbyteries, who for this cause are hereby desired to hasten their observations unto them; and they are to make report of their travells herein to the commission of the Assembly for publick affaires against their first meeting in February next: And the commission after revising thereof, shall send the same to Provincial Assemblies, to bee transmitted to Presbyteries, that by their further consideration the matter may be fully prepared to the next Assembly: And because some psalmes in that paraphrase sent from England are composed in verses which do not agree with the common tunes, therefore it is recommended that these psalmes be turned into other verses which may agree to the common tunes, that is, having the first line of eight syllables and the second line of six, that so both versions being together, use may be made of either of them in congregations as shall be found convenient: And the Assembly doth further recommend, that Mr. Zachary Boyd be at the paines to translate the other scriptural songs in meeter,* and to report his travells also to the

* Z. Boyd, as I am informed, versified the greater part of the Bible, but his work is confined to the College Library, Glasgow.

commission of Assembly, that after their examination thereof, they may send the same to Presbyteries to be there considered untill the next General Assembly."

The committee nominated in this act, entered on their work with becoming spirit, prosecuted it with laudable zeal, and at next meeting brought forward their report according to appointment.

The Assembly, anno. 1648, so far approved Rous' paraphrase, with the corrections and alterations made upon it, as to send it down to Presbyteries, "that," as their act expresses it, "they may carefully revise and examine the same, and thereafter send them with their corrections to the commission of this Assembly to be appointed for publick affaires, who are to have a care to cause re-examine the animadversions of Presbyteries, and prepare a report to next General Assembly," &c.

Many of the Presbyteries obtemperated this appointment, and some did not; but the Assembly, however, in August, 1649, found themselves in circumstances to warrant them to refer the whole matter to the commission to meet in November following. Their act of reference shows how cautiously they went to work, and how anxious they were during the whole procedure to have the version improved as much as possible. It runs thus: "The General Assembly having taken some view of the new paraphrase of the psalmes in meeter, with the corrections and animadversions thereupon, sent from several persons and presbyteries; and finding that they cannot overtake the review and examination of the whole in this Assembly, therefore, now after so much time and so great paines about the correcting, and examining thereof from time to time some years bygone, that the work may come now to some conclusion, they do ordain the brethren appointed for perusing the same during the meeting of this Assembly, viz. Masters James Hamilton, John Smith, Hew Mackail, Robert Traill, George Hutcheson, and Robert Laurie, after the dissolving of this Assembly, to go on in that work carefully; and to report their travells to the commission of the General Assembly for publick affaires at their meeting at Edinburgh, in November; and the said commission after perusall and re-examination thereof, is hereby authorized with full power to conclude and establish the paraphrase, and to publish and emit the same for publick use."

By this reference the business was entirely left in the hands of the commission; and on the 23d November, 1649, at Edinburgh, they issued this interesting cause in the following decision: "The commission of the General Assembly having with great diligence considered the paraphrase of the psalmes in meeter, sent from the Assembly of Divines in England by our commissioners whilst they were there, as it was corrected by former General Assemblies, committees from them, and now at last by the brethren deputed by the late Assembly for that purpose:

and, having exactly examined the same, do approve the said paraphrase, as it is now compiled; and, therefore, by the power given them by the said Assembly, do appoint it to be printed and published for public use: Hereby authorizing the same to be the only paraphrase of the psalms of David to be sung in the Kirk of Scotland; and discharging the old paraphrase, and any other than this new paraphrase to be made use of in any congregation or family after the first day of May, in the year 1650.— And, for uniformity in this part of the worship of God, do seriously recommend to Presbyteries, to cause make an intimation of this act, and take special care that the same be timeously put to execution, and duly observed. A. KERR."

This excellent version, as corrected and approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, received the approbation, and was sanctioned by the authority of the Scottish Parliament, at Edinburgh, on the 8th January, 1650, as appears from the following Act:

"The Committee of Estates, having considered the English Paraphrase of the Psalms of David in Metre, presented this day unto them by the Commission of General Assembly, together with their Act, and the Act of the late Assembly approving the said Paraphrase, and appointing the same to be sung through this Kirk; therefore the Committee doth also approve the said Paraphrase, and interpose their authority for the publishing and practising thereof; hereby ordaining the same, and no other, to be made use throughout this kingdom, according to the tenor of the said Acts of the General Assembly and their Commissioners.

"T. HENDERSON."

Many of the Independents and Dissenters in England became desirous to have this Psalter, the only authorized one in the established church of Scotland, introduced to their chapels and places of public worship, and in 1673, an edition of it was published with a recommendatory preface by Dr. Owen, and subscribed by twenty-five other divines.

The Preface is short, and to the following effect:—"Surely singing of Psalms is a duty of such comfort and profit, that it needeth not our recommendation; the new nature is instead of all arguments, which cannot be without this scriptural solace.—Our devotion is best secured, where the matter and the words are of immediately divine inspiration; and to us, David's Psalms seem plainly intended by those terms of *Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*, which the Apostle useth, Eph. v. 19, Col. iii. 16. But it is meet that these divine compositions should be represented to us in a fit translation, lest we want David in David; while his holy extasies are delivered in a flat and bold expression. The translation which is now put into thy hand cometh nearest to the original of any that we have seen, and runneth with such a fluent sweetness, that we thought it fit to recom-

mend it to thy Christian acceptance, some of us having used it already, with great comfort and satisfaction."

This recommendation is subscribed by Jno. Owen, D. D., Thos. Manton, D. D., Henry Langley, D. D., William Jenkyns, James Innes, Thos. Watson, Thos. Lye, Matthew Poole, John Millward, John Chester, Geo. Cokayn, Matthew Mead, Rob. Franklin, Thos. Doolittle, Thos. Vincent, Nathaniel Vincent, John Rythen, Wm. Thomson, Nicolas Blaikie, Charles Merton, Edmund Calamy, William Carslake, James Janeway, John Hicks, John Baker, Richard Mayo.*

Such, Mr. Editor, was the origin and the subsequent process of improvement of our highly valuable and scriptural version of the Psalms. The account indeed is not so full as could be wished, yet I flatter myself that imperfect though it be, it will afford abundant reason to conclude that we have an excellent and exact metrical translation of the Songs of David—the sweet singer of Israel. It was subjected to frequent and careful revision—it was often touched by the hand of the correctors—and, from its general execution, it will be admitted the Assembly are borne out in stating as they do in the titlepage, "that the metre is more plain, smooth, and agreeable to the text than any heretofore."

Dr. Nicholas Brady, and Nahum Tate, poet laureat in his day, published a version of the psalms in 1698; but in my humble opinion it is far inferior to our own. Take as a specimen for comparison Ps. lxxii. 18, 19:—

"Then bless'd be God the mighty Lord,
The God whom Isr'el fears;
Who only wond'rous in his works.
Beyond compare appears.

Let earth be with his glory fill'd,
And ever bless his name;
Whilst to his praise the list'ning world
Their glad assent proclaim."

Is not this tame when compared with the poetical pathos and glow of feeling expressed in our version?

Now blessed be the Lord our God,
The God of Israel;
For he alone dost wond'rous works,
In glory that excel.

And blessed be his glorious name
To all eternity;
The whole earth let his glory fill:
Amen. So let it be.

There is a kind of inspiration here, of which the other is entirely destitute.

Now, from the preceding account it is abundantly manifest, that our Psalter met with the most favourable reception both in Scot-

* Treatise on the Divine Constitution of David's Psalms.

land and in England, and was alike approved by Independents and Presbyterians. And it well deserves the consideration and cordial regard of Christians of every denomination. It has, all along, been held in high estimation by our church, and, I trust, will continue, for ages yet to come, to yield the best consolations and the purest delight to the genuine citizens of Zion. To please a modish taste or fitful fancy our Psalmody may be greatly enlarged, by the adoption of religious hymns and metrical paraphrases of other portions of scripture; but it certainly would be matter of serious regret, and deeply to be deprecated, were any productions of this sort ever to supplant, or lessen, in the smallest degree, our attachment to the received excellent version of David's Psalms sung in our churches. In using it, we find we are employing, almost always, the very language of inspiration in our praises, and expressing our devotional feelings, not "with the enticing words of man's wisdom," but in words dictated by the Spirit of the living God. And, "our devotion," says Dr. Owen, "is best secured when the matter and the words are of immediately divine inspiration." In singing these Psalms let us endeavour to catch their spirit, "making melody in our heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Claiming your indulgence for the length of this article,

I am, &c.

NARRATOR.



PRINCE MORO.

[The following paper was put into our hands by a friend, who received it from a physician at Fayetteville, in North-Carolina, by whom it was drawn up. It contains, we are assured, a faithful statement of facts; and we are persuaded its perusal will give pleasure to our Christian readers. It has brought to our recollection a remark we have heard—"that when God intends to communicate his grace to a heathen, he will either be brought to the gospel, or the gospel be carried to him."] [*Ch. Adv.*

About the close of the importation of negroes into South-Carolina, a rice planter of that state purchased a gang of slaves and sent them to his plantation; among whom was a man of a slender frame and delicate constitution, who was not able to labour in the field, or had not the disposition to do so. His health failing, he was considered of no value, and disregarded. At length he strolled off, and wandering from plantation to plantation reached this place, was taken up as a runaway and put in jail, where he remained for some time. As no one claimed him, and he appeared of no value, the jail was thrown open,* that he might run

* The cause of the jail being thrown open was, he was found to be "a bright mason."

away; but he had no disposition to make his escape. The boys amused themselves with his good natured playful behaviour, and fitted up a temporary desk, made of a flour barrel, on which he wrote in a masterly hand, writing from right to left, in what was to them an unknown language. He was also noticed by some gentlemen of the place; but his keeper grew tired of so useless a charge, and he was publicly sold for his jail dues. His purchaser, a gentleman living about thirty miles from this place, finding him rather of a slender make, took him into his family as a house servant. Here he soon became a favourite of the inmates of the house, particularly of the children. His good conduct in a short time put him in possession of the keys of all his master's stores, and he gradually acquired a knowledge of the English language. His master being a pious man, he was instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, which he received with great pleasure; and he seemed to see new beauties in the plan of the gospel, which had never appeared to him in the Koran; for he had been reared and instructed in the Mahomedan religion, and it was found that the scraps of writing from his pen, were mostly passages from the Koran. It would seem that he was a prince in his own country, which must have been far in the interior of Africa—perhaps Tombuctoo or its neighbourhood. At all events his intercourse with the Arabs had enabled him to write and speak their language with the most perfect ease. Some of the Africans pretend to say he was what they call “a *pray-God* to the king;” by which may be understood, a priest or learned man, who offered up prayers for the king of his nation, and was of his household. His dignified deportment showed him to be of a superior cast—his humility that of a peaceable subject—not a despot. In his person he is well formed, of a middle size, small hands and feet, and erect in his deportment. His complexion and hair, as well as the form of the head, are distinctly of the African character. Some years since he united himself to the Presbyterian church in this place, of which he continues an orderly and respectable member. A gentleman who felt a strong interest for the good *Prince Moro*, as he is called, sent to the British Bible Society, and procured for him an Arabic Bible; so that he now reads the scriptures in his native language, and blesses Him who causes good to come out of evil by making him a slave. His good master has offered to send him to his native land, his home and his friends; but he says “*No*—this is my home, and here are my friends, and here is my Bible—I enjoy all I want in this world. If I should return to my native land, the fortune of war might transport me to a country where I should be deprived of the greatest of all blessings, that of worshipping the true and living God, and his Son Jesus Christ, whom to worship and serve is eternal life.”

TEZEL, THE NOTED PREACHER OF INDULGENCES.

This person's name has been handed down to posterity, from the well-known circumstance of his conduct having occasioned the first appearance of Luther against the corruptions of the church of Rome. He carried on the trade of vending indulgences in a manner perfectly congenial to its scandalous nature. He proclaimed wherever he came, that he was ready to pardon, for money, the most aggravated sins, both past and future. Having erected a red cross in a temple, he averred, that it had equal efficacy with the cross of Christ, that he himself had saved more souls by indulgences, than Peter saved by his sermons; and that at the very clink of the money the souls did take their flight from purgatory to heaven. It affords a strong proof of the ignorance and superstition of the times, that notwithstanding this extravagance and blasphemy, crowds flocked unto Tezel both in towns and in the country, and that almost every widow and beggar purchased indulgences either for themselves or others. But there were not wanting some who, as they saw through the cheat, sought a fit opportunity for discovering their derision, and endeavoured to outreach him in his own trade. The following humorous anecdote, which is well authenticated, is one instance of this.

A person of rank went to Tezel, and enquired at him, if he might obtain pardon for a crime he had resolved in his mind to commit. He said, he had a quarrel with a certain man who had rashly injured him, upon whom he wished to revenge himself, that he would not take away his life, but would cause him long to retain a remembrance of his severe vengeance. Tezel without much intreaty, acceded to the proposal, and declared, that if he received thirty imperial crowns, he would grant the pardon. The knight, without delay, procured the money, and received a patent for committing the crime, signed by Tezel. A short time after this, Tezel having gone out of the city, the knight having stationed himself in a proper place, attacked him on his return when off his guard, and out of the reach of assistance, and having beat him, and taken from him a large sum of money which he had collected in the adjacent country, he dismissed him, with the intimation, that this was the crime for which he had granted him an indulgence a little before. When the fact came to be known, the prince of the country was at first enraged that such a thing should have been committed within his territories, but being informed of the circumstances, he was pleased, and, it is said, inflicted no penalty upon the nobleman.

[EXTRACTED FROM TOPLADY'S SHORT MEMORIALS.]

I would observe, that I have, through the blessing of God, been perfectly well through this whole day, both as to health, strength, and spirits, and gone through my church-duties with the utmost

ease, freedom, and pleasure; yet I have experienced *nothing* of that spiritual comfort and joy which I sometimes do. A demonstration this, that they are prodigiously wide of the mark, who think that what believers know to be the joys of the Holy Ghost, are in fact no other than certain pleasing sensations, arising from a brisk circulation of the blood, and a lively flow of the animal spirits. In this light the consolations of God are considered by those who never experienced them. But, if what the regenerate declare to be the sweetness of divine fellowship is in reality no more than the cold formalist imagines to be the mere result of good health, it would follow, that every person, when in full health and spirits, actually enjoys that inward complacency and sweetness. But this is very far from being the case. I myself am a witness, that spiritual comforts are sometimes highest, when bodily health, strength, and spirits, are at the lowest; and when bodily health, strength, and spirits, are at the highest, spiritual comforts are sometimes at the lowest, nay, clean gone, and totally absent. Whence I conclude, that the sensible effusion of divine love in the soul is superior to, independent of, and distinct from, bodily health, strength, and spirits. These may be where that is not, and *vice versa*.

HINTS ON PRAYING FOR THE SICK, ILLUSTRATED BY AN ANECDOTE.

A VAGUE and indefinite way of praying for the sick, may be productive of the most alarming consequences; while, at such a period, when fears are alive and active, and the unhappy patient is eager in the observance of every thing that may seem to throw light upon his condition, the manner of addressing the throne of grace on his behalf, may, if judiciously adapted to his case, by the blessing of God, be rendered eminently useful to his soul.—An anecdote to this effect, is related by the Rev. Dr. Mason of New-York. He was requested to visit a lady, in dying circumstances in that city, who, together with her husband, openly avowed infidel principles, though they attended on his ministry. On approaching her bedside, he asked her, if she felt herself a sinner, and her need of a Saviour. She frankly told him she did not—and that she believed the doctrine of a Mediator to be all a farce. “Then,” said the doctor, “I have no consolation for you—not one word of comfort. There is not a single passage in the Bible, that warrants me to speak peace to one who rejects the Mediator provided: you must take the consequences of your infidelity.” So saying, he was on the point of leaving the room, when some one said, “Well, if you cannot speak consolation to her, you can pray for her.” To this he assented, and kneeling down by the bedside, prayed for her as a guilty sinner just sinking into hell—and then rising from his knees, he left the house. To his utter astonishment, a day or two after, he received a message from the lady herself, earnestly desiring that he would come and see her, and that without delay. He immedi-

ately obeyed the summons. But what was his amazement when on entering the room, she held out her hand to him, and said with a benignant smile, "It is all true—all that you said on Sabbath is true. I have seen myself the wretched sinner you described me to be in prayer. I have seen Christ to be that all-sufficient Saviour you said he was—and God has mercifully snatched me from the abyss of infidelity in which I was sunk, and placed me on that rock of ages. There I am secure—there I shall remain—I know whom I have believed." All this was like a dream to him. But she proceeded, and displayed as accurate a knowledge of the method of salvation revealed in the gospel, and as firm a reliance on it, as if she had been a disciple of Christ for half a century. Yet there was nothing like boasting or presumption—all was humility, resignation, and confidence. She called her husband, and charged him to educate their daughter in the fear of God, and, above all, to keep from her those novels and books of infidel sensibility, by which she had so nearly been ruined: and on the evening of the same day, expired, in fulness of joy, and peace in believing.

The account which the doctor received from her attendants was, that his prayer fastened upon her mind—that shortly after he had left her, she became alarmed about the state of her soul—that such at one period was her agony, that, although on the Sabbath her voice was so feeble that she could scarcely be heard, yet her cries were distinctly heard from the second story to the cellar of the house, and that she at length found peace in believing in Christ, as he is exhibited in the gospel. This anecdote will afford both instruction and encouragement.

REMARKS.

It may be laid down as a rule that holds good in most cases, that very little reliance is to be placed on conversions similar to the one above mentioned; not that we would be understood to question the veracity of those who relate the accounts of such conversions, but their *reality*, in the supposed subjects of them. It is not, however, for us to set limits to the operations of God's grace on perishing sinners; but we are decidedly of opinion, that there is but little encouragement held out in the word of God to such as have spent their lives, in *rejecting* the Saviour, and in using all their influence (till brought by the hand of God near the borders of the grave) to cast odium and contempt upon his people, and his cause in the world. Experience, also, seems to support this opinion, an instance of which, the reader will perceive in the following article entitled "the atheist." There are two things mentioned in the above anecdote worthy of notice, it is said, that the lady *attended on Dr. M's. ministry—that she displayed an accurate knowledge of the method of salvation revealed in the gospel.* These advantages are seldom possessed by the subjects of what is commonly termed a *death-bed* repentance.

THE ATHEIST.

Some time ago one of those persons who profess to believe nothing, was on shipboard, when there arose a brisk gale, which

could frighten no body but himself. Upon the rolling of the ship, he fell upon his knees, and confessed to the chaplain that he had been a vile atheist, and had denied a Supreme Being ever since he came to his estate. The good man was astonished, and a report immediately ran through the ship, that there was an atheist upon the upper deck. Several of the common seamen, who had never heard the word before, thought it had been some strange fish; but they were more surprised when they saw it was a man, and heard out of his own mouth, that he had never believed till that day, that there was a God. As he lay in the agonies of confession, one of the honest tars whispered to the boatswain, that it would be a good deed to heave him overboard. But being now within sight of land, and of a sudden the wind having fallen, the penitent relapsed, and begged all present, as they were gentlemen, not to say any thing of what had passed.

He had not been ashore above two days, when one of the company began to rally him upon his devotion on shipboard, which the other denied in so high terms, that it produced the lie on both sides, and ended in a duel. The atheist was run through the body, and after some loss of blood became as good a Christian as he was at sea, until he found that his wound was not mortal. Such momentary compunctions however, only left him to sink deeper in infidelity and atheism, and after writing several pamphlets against Christianity, he died as he lived, an Atheist!

FULFILMENT OF A PREDICTION.

A gentlemen travelling in a stagecoach, attempted to divert the company by ridiculing the Scriptures, a common practice with the sceptics of the present day. "As to the prophecies," said he, "in particular, they were all written after the events took place." A Minister in the coach, who had hitherto been silent, replied, "Sir, I must beg leave to mention one remarkable prophecy as an exception,—2 Pet iii. 2. 'Knowing this first, that there shall come in the latter days, scoffers.' Now, Sir, whether the event be not long after the prediction, I leave the company to judge." The mouth of the scorner was stopped.

DETACHED SAYINGS.

To talk of happiness without holiness, is as apparent nonsense, as to talk of being well without health, or of being saved without salvation.—*Baxter*.

We must not judge of faith by persons, but of persons by faith.—*Tertul*.

The Turkish empire, great as it is, is but a morsel which the master of the house throweth to dogs.—*Luther*.

A man upon the top of one hill may seem very near the top of another, and yet he must descend from the one, before he can

possibly reach the other. So a man on the mount of self-conceit or self-righteousness, may suppose himself as good as on the hill of God; a step, and he is there; but he must descend, and passing the vale of humility and self-renunciation, ascend the hill of salvation by faith in Christ Jesus, or he will never enter the New Jerusalem.

PROFANE SWEARING REPROVED.

The excellent Mr. Howe being at dinner with some persons of fashion, a gentleman expatiated largely in praise of Charles I. introducing some harsh reflections upon others. Mr. Howe, observing that he mixed many horrid oaths with his discourse, told him, that, in his humble opinion, he had omitted a singular excellence in the character of that prince. The gentleman eagerly desired him to mention it, and seemed all impatience to know what it was. "It was this, sir," said Mr. Howe, "he was never heard to swear an oath in common conversation." The hint was as politely received as given; and the gentleman promised to break off the practice.

The same Mr. Howe, once conversing with a nobleman in St. James' park, who swore profanely in his conversation, expressed great satisfaction in the thought, that there is a God who governs the world, who will finally make a retribution to all according to their works; and "who, my Lord," added he, "will make a difference between him that sweareth, and him that feareth an oath." His Lordship immediately answered, "I thank you, sir, for your freedom; I take your meaning, and shall endeavour to make a good use of it." Mr. H. replied, "I have reason to thank your Lordship for saving me the most difficult part of a discourse, which is the *application*."

Another time, passing two persons of quality, who were talking with great eagerness, and *damned* each other repeatedly, Mr. H. said to them, taking off his hat in a respectful manner, "I pray God *save* you both;" for which handsome reproof, they immediately returned him thanks.

The truly honourable Mr. Boyle, as eminent for philosophy as for morality, was so careful to avoid this profane custom, that he never mentioned the name of God in his conversation, without making an observable pause before it, that so he might both feel and diffuse among the company the veneration due to the sacred Majesty of the universe.

The brave Colonel Gardiner took pains to prevent swearing in his regiment, at the head of which he would publicly declare his abhorrence of it, urging all his officers to avoid giving, by their example, any sanction to a crime which it was their duty to punish. A number of military gentlemen once dined with him at his own house, when he addressed them with much respect, and

begged leave to remind them, that as he was a justice of the peace in that district, he was bound by oath to put the laws against swearing into execution ; and therefore intreated them to be upon their guard. Only one of the gentlemen offended on that day, who immediately paid the penalty ; which was given to the poor, with the universal approbation of the company.

ANECDOTES.

A protestant clergyman, having occasion to travel in France, before the late revolution in that country, happened in one of the inns where he stopped, to fall into conversation with a French gentleman, a papist. The papist was a well-bred, intelligent man, and conducted himself with much politeness when conversing on common topics : but no sooner did he come to learn from some unavoidable expressions in conversation, that the gentleman with whom he was talking was a protestant, than he discovered his bigotry. "And pray," says he, using the hackneyed phrase and question upon this subject, "where was *your* religion before the days of Luther?" "Permit me," said the clergyman, "to answer your question by another : where, pray, was your face, sir, this morning before you washed it?" The meaning was obvious.

The following is related by Sir Richard Hill :

When that faithful minister of Christ, Mr. Venn, was vicar of Huddersfield, in Yorkshire, he told me, that a neighbouring clergyman, the Rev. Dr. L——, one day addressed him nearly in the following words, "Mr. Venn, I don't know how it is, but I should really think your doctrines of grace and faith were calculated to make all your hearers live in sin ; and yet I must own that there is an astonishing reformation wrought in your parish ; whereas I don't believe I ever made one soul the better, though I have been telling them their duty for many years." Mr. Venn smiled at the doctor's ingenuous confession, and frankly told him, "he would do well to burn all his old sermons, and try what preaching Christ would do."

Religious Intelligence.

THE PERSECUTION IN SWITZERLAND.

Resolutions of the three denominations relative to the late persecutions in Switzerland.

At a meeting of the general body of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the three Denominations, resident in and about London and Westminster, held the 3d of May, 1825,

It was resolved unanimously,

That it is with astonishment and sorrow that this body has

received from different and credible sources the information that, in Switzerland, which used to be regarded as an asylum for those who fled from persecution, and particularly in the Canton of Vaud, under a protestant government, and a presbyterian church, a severe persecution has been, for more than a year, exercised upon peaceable citizens, of spotless moral and political character, for no alleged crime, but the fact of their thinking it their duty to dissent from the Church Establishment of that country, and their attempting accordingly to hold assemblies for religious worship in the way which to them appears most agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, and most conducive to their own moral improvement. This persecution has consisted in the disturbances of religious meetings; in affording countenance to assaults and cruelties inflicted by savage mobs upon innocent individuals; in the refusal of protection from such injuries, when formal application has been made to the magistracy; in acts of the government denouncing severe penalties upon all persons who may hold religious assemblies, however small, excepting those of the established communion; and in the infliction of these penalties by fine, imprisonment and banishment, upon various respectable persons, among whom are ministers of unquestionable character for piety, learning and usefulness.

That this body disclaims any pretence of a right to interfere in the affairs of foreign nations, it acknowledges itself bound by the obligation of humanity, to testify its sympathy with the oppressed and persecuted; and by the principles of our common religion, to use every lawful and practical effort for the relief of innocent sufferers, and to contribute towards removing the foul reproach of persecution from fellow Christians and fellow Protestants in any part of the world.

That this body indulges the hope, that calm reflection, and an experience of the mischiefs produced by intolerance, will speedily lead the government of the Canton of Vaud to repeal the unjust and cruel edicts which it has issued against Dissenters, and to give effect to those principles of religious freedom which are the basis of the Protestant religion, and are a main support of the prosperity and happiness of our country.

Finally, that we invite our fellow-christians, and especially our brethren in the holy ministry, of every denomination, to implore, in their private and public supplications at the throne of grace, the bestowment of present consolation and speedy relief upon all who, for conscience towards God, are enduring unmerited sufferings, from cruel mockings, bonds and imprisonment, spoliation, destitution and exile.

[*Lon. Evan. Mag.*]

AFRICA.

[We are confident that our readers will be gratified with the following interesting piece of intelligence, though not of a strictly religious character.]

Whatever tends (however remotely) to meliorate the condition of wretched Africa, cannot fail to interest the christian community. It is no less a lamentable fact, than a foul disgrace to this age of boasted light and missionary effort, that numerous vessels under the French, Spanish, Portuguese and Brazilian flags, are carrying on a horrible traffic in human flesh, to an enormous extent, notwithstanding some of these governments have annexed severe penalties to the commission of this crime. From August to December of 1824, upwards of 30 slave vessels, (most of them under French colours,) nineteen of which were boarded by the boats of the British ship *Maidstone*, were detected in this villanous traffic. Each of these vessels carried from four to five hundred slaves; thus, making in the short period of three months, more than thirteen thousand unhappy victims, torn from home and country, and all that can render life desirable, to glut the avarice of a gang of the most inhuman monsters that ever blackened the annals of our race! Where is the man possessing the common feelings of our nature, whose ear is not pained at the report of these evils? And where is the Christian, who will not supplicate the Father of all his mercies for their removal, and who will not rejoice at every event calculated to forward that period when the African, the miserable "servant of servants," shall be emancipated from his cruel bondage? It is evident to our mind, if the measure spoken of in the following article be carried into operation, that it will eventually annihilate this detestable traffic. Let this be once effected, and more will be gained for the cause of religion and humanity, than if every African now suffering under the scourge of the oppressor, were to be manumitted and transported to his own country, there, perhaps, under existing circumstances, to be again enslaved.]

Some time since, it will be remembered, that a writer, intimately acquainted with the subject, proposed in the *American*, the formation of a mercantile company, for the purpose of importing from Africa the productions of the African soil. These productions were coffee, rice, indigo, cotton, sugar cane and tobacco, all of which were of the native growth of Africa; capable of cultivation to any extent. He went on furthermore to shew, that this traffic would be the death blow to the slave trade, and entered into a variety of luminous details and statistical calculations to prove the fact. He contended, and with much force of argument, that when the Africans themselves were made sensible of the value of their own productions they would abandon their horrible traffic in slaves, and devote themselves to the cultivation and improvement of their own native resources. What impression this publication made we are unable to say; but we now learn from the *Glasgow Courier*, that an extensive company of British merchants of high character, capital and knowledge, has been formed to open and carry on a trade with the African coast. They have obtained the cession of the island of Fernando Po, an island sixty miles in extent lying near the coast of Benin, and abundant in the growth of sugar cane, rice and tobacco. It is there proposed to open a trade with the countries on the con-

continent washed by the great rivers in the Bights of Benin and Biafra. It is further contemplated to supply from this source the West-India colonies with various articles of live stock, while the produce of the mother country will be exchanged to a great extent for African productions. In connexion with these great advantages, it is proposed by the British Admiralty from the commanding position afforded by the Fernando Po to watch the progress of the slave trade. This plan affords a healthy rendezvous for the British navy employed on the African coast, and commands the greatest outlets and inlets to the African continent. We are farther assured that this business is in the hands of high and honorable men, who mean to raise up and establish powerful commercial depots and colonies to their country; that in the course of a few years they expect to behold commerce, agriculture and knowledge marching rapidly into the darkest recesses of Africa. It appears then whatever may have been thought of the views of our correspondent, the very plans suggested by him for the extirpation of the slave trade has received the countenance, support and co-operation not only of the rich English capitalists, but also of the administration itself—it is now a governmental measure, and will receive all the aid which that powerful kingdom can furnish. This is at least full and consummate proof of the practicability of the ideas entertained by our correspondent—he has the whole administration of England at his back.—*Baltimore American.*

ADDRESS

Of the Continental Society for the diffusion of Religious Knowledge over the Continent of Europe.

It is now nearly seven years since this Society was formed in Paris, and organized in London, with the professed design of making known the gospel of Christ among the nations of Europe, through the agency of *native* preachers of the different countries. The state of the continent called loudly for such exertions; a gross and demoralizing superstition had for ages enslaved the people, and swayed its iron sceptre over their consciences: and if, in later times, the chains of this bondage have in some instances been broken, it has been by the prevalence of a system of infidelity, which, while it struck at the abuses of Christianity, has aimed at the extinction of its vital principles. Hence in some countries the Catholic population has asserted its liberty by indifference and contempt of all religion; while the Protestants have lost all attachment to the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, and are sunk into Arian and Socinian errors, or that species of refined scepticism, known by the name of *Neology*, which is more nearly allied to infidelity. These remarks apply with strict propriety to France and Germany; and though there are a few persons, and even pastors, in both communions, who have

stood fast in the evil day, and maintained the ancient faith uncorrupted, their number is small, and their influence far from being extensive. To encourage and reanimate their zeal, and to plant the standard of the gospel amidst so many millions of their countrymen, seem to be objects of the highest importance, at which the founders of this Institution have principally aimed since its establishment; and no plan appeared so suitable for the attainment of their end, as the employment of *Native Preachers*. Familiar with the languages of their respective countries, these persons have no difficulties to cope with, in conveying the glad tidings of salvation; while at the same time no jealousy exists on the score of foreign interference. Having in view the establishment of no distinct sect or party, and preaching only Jesus Christ, and him crucified, they find a ready access to persons of all professions, and recommend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

He, who has the hearts of all in his hands, and all events at his disposal, has not only prepared the way for the spread of divine truth by the removal of the prejudices of superstition, but has been graciously pleased to raise up men every way fitted for the great work of publishing it, and to direct the managers of this Society to the discovery and employment of such useful agents. The event has justified their expectations: they have now fifteen persons employed in declaring the gospel in the countries above-mentioned, as well as in Switzerland and Flanders, besides eleven others, who are occupied in going through different parts of the country, selling and distributing the Holy Scriptures; and every account received of their labours proves, that they are not in vain, but that the great Head of the Church is owning them for much good to the souls of many. The Committee have likewise the testimony of several highly esteemed pastors of the French and Swiss Reformed Churches, as to the prudence with which they conduct themselves, and the amicable relations they are ever ready to cultivate with all denominations of Christians.

Flanders and the North of France, including Paris.—Five *Preachers* and three *itinerant Venders of New Testaments*, are actively and usefully employed in Flanders and the North of France. The details of their labours, which are published from time to time, in the *Extracts of Correspondence*, prove that considerable attention is excited among Catholics and Protestants; the Holy Scriptures are received and read with great avidity, and some souls are truly converted to God.

Orleans.—Near this city a number of places almost destitute of any instruction, receive with much joy the visits of the Agents of the Continental Society. One *colporteur* is at present labouring here with acceptance.

South of France.—In the South of France, a large district, where the Protestants are numerous, has been opened by Divine

Providence, to the operations of this Society; and THREE of its *agents* are occupied in periodically visiting the different cities, towns and villages, assisted by two *colporteurs*. The blessing of God has crowned their labours—the pastors have opened their churches and pulpits to them, while their flocks in great numbers attend to hear them—hang upon their words, and express earnest desires for the repetition of their visits. The Catholics too crowd to the Protestant temples to hear the gospel; and, in one place, many of the lost sheep of the house of Israel are found amongst their most attentive auditors.

The course of the Rhine in Germany and France.—Two of the *agents* of the Society are occupied in different places on the banks of the Rhine, with two *colporteurs* attached to them; so that while they labour in the word and doctrine, sometimes at their respective stations, and at others in the towns and villages which surround them, their assistants carry the copies of the New Testament to the neighbouring hamlets, and thus convey to those who are afar off, and to them that are nigh, the unsearchable riches of Christ. They are in friendly communication with some interesting Catholics in Germany, who have received the truth through the means of those excellent men, Van Ess, Gosner, Boos, Lindle, &c. and have suffered much persecution on account of it.

Switzerland.—On the borders of this country, three *agents* and two *colporteurs* are successfully employed; and though persecution has prevailed much in those parts, they are pursuing their work without experiencing any formidable impediment.

Spain.—One of the *agents** has made some progress towards establishing depots of New Testaments on the frontiers of Spain, and met with some success. The seed is sown there under the favourable countenance of local ecclesiastical authority, and a promise is held out of future beneficial results. The Society is also contemplating the means of affording religious instruction to the numerous Spanish refugees in this country.

† *Hamburgh.*—One *agent* has lately been engaged by the Society, to labour in Hamburgh and its immediate neighbourhood, where there is considerable evidence of his usefulness. Facilities seem to be afforded in that part to the progress of the gospel, and it is trusted, that the efforts of the agent established there, will be productive of much good, seeing that the promise is, "My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I send it."

The *agents* of this Society do not neglect that grand instrument of spreading the Truth—the Education of Children. In every station they have Sabbath and Week-day Schools; they are regularly instructed in the Holy Scriptures; many pleasing instances are continually occurring, confirmatory of the prophetic

* One of those in the South of France.

declaration, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained praise."

Some of the agents are wholly supported by the Society; others are established Ministers, who lend their valuable aid, and preach the gospel in many villages round their respective districts, without any other charge to the Society than their carriage and the hire of suitable rooms. For these things the Committee desire to express their humble and thankful acknowledgments to Almighty God, and fervently pray that he will continue to bless their work, assured that their labourers will plant in vain, and water in vain, unless He give the increase. Encouraged by the hope that He will hear them, they earnestly call upon all the friends of the gospel to assist them in this good work, by their pecuniary contributions and their prayers, persuaded that they will not suffer an Institution that not only promises, but has actually been the instrument of so much good to the Continent, to languish for the want of their cordial support.

The Society has Auxiliaries and Corresponding Committees in the following places in the United Kingdom: viz. Bristol, Gloucestershire, Colchester, Birmingham, Shrewsbury, Derby, Matlock, Nottingham, Sheffield, Hull, Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Lutterworth, Harborough, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paisley, Stirling, Perth, Dundee, Montrose, Aberdeen, Dublin, Belfast, &c.

[*Edinburgh Christian Monitor.*]



FRANCE.

In the course of the debate, in the French chambers, on the war and marine budgets, it is stated that the minister of marine declared, that "every effort was made by the French government to prevent the continuance of the slave trade." If this be true, (as we must say, we fear it is not,) the French have been grossly slandered in the English prints. The French minister, however, to do him justice, went into a considerable detail of particulars in proof of his statement. He affirmed that all suspected vessels were watched—that the government of Senegal had received particular instructions in this respect—that at the present time the number of vessels which were an object of judicial inquiry amounted to 375; of which 68 had been acquitted, 61 condemned, and 161 were waiting for judgement. It is unaccountable to us how the French slave ships should swarm, as they do, on the coast of Africa, if the absolute and energetic government which now exists in France be honestly and earnestly desirous to put an end to this traffic in human beings.

[*Christian Advocate.*]